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Whippen

Frederick Orin Bartlett

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J. M. BARTLETT,

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WHIPPEN

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He brought his own wife up here one night to see it for herself, but she clung timidly to his long arm and scarcely dared lift her eyes

See page 30

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WHIPPEN

BY

FREDERICK ORIN BARTLETT

Author of "The Guardian," "The Seventh Noon," etc., etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

CHARLES D. MITCHELL

BOSTON

SMALL, MAYNARD AND COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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"I say, these must be good!" he exclaimed 60

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WHIPPEN

CHAPTER I

Like many another unusual man, Whippen began life by acquiring a reputation as a fool, based, oddly enough, on the fact that he was unafraid. Even as an infant he had his own ideas about the proper food to eat and the proper time to sleep, and no form of punishment that his anxious parents could devise served to alter those notions in the least. He stood in no awe of threats and accepted spankings with calm stoicism. When he was six years old, his mother gave up as

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hopeless any further attempt to instil reason into him at home, and with a sigh of relief turned him over to the discipline of the village school. Various teachers struggled with Whippen intermittently until he was fourteen, and then decided that he was only wasting their time and his own. He was n't vicious; but he refused to learn except in his own way, and so after breaking several rattan sticks upon him they let him go. This suited Whippen, and he secured a job at the local grocery store.

He did well there; in fact, he soon appointed himself chief clerk, and almost immediately afterward assumed full control of the business. For five

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years the proprietor rebelled at this arbitrary arrangement, but finally submitted and contented himself with carrying out Whippen's orders and banking his profits, which in some miraculous way increased almost fifty per cent. He could not understand this increase, neither could any one else. Whippen, of course, was not thought of in this connection. Laboring under the handicap of his early reputation, he was never given credit for anything.

Whippen never grew old enough to be taken seriously. As the years went by, he increased in length and breadth, but his face remained the same freckled, good-natured face it was

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at ten. He had blue eyes and an unforgettable smile, vague and fascinating as a child's. He carried himself with an air of anxious earnestness.

Then Whippen married, which every one knows is a fool thing for a young man to do — married a little girl who was as poor as a church mouse and not much bigger. She did, however, have a knack of making dainty candies, and Whippen conceived the notion one day of keeping a pound or two of those for sale in the store. It was at this point that A. Courtland Marchmont stepped into Whippen's life for less than five full minutes; but that was really the turning-point in Whippen's

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career, for Marchmont furnished Whippen with a suggestion — with a great big idea, in fact.

Marchmont himself cannot be blamed for that, you understand. He never before furnished any one with an idea; did n't know he had any. In the last analysis perhaps even this one was not his own. It really came from the great metropolis of which he himself was a product.

Marchmont with his wife was touring the mountains in a closed limousine at an average rate of forty miles an hour. When he reached Centerville, he was on his last lap. Awaking from a siesta which he had enjoyed while passing through a region

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of mountains and lakes worthy of comparison with any in Scotland, he became conscious of a thirst. Catching a glimpse, between yawns, of a country grocery store, he signaled the chauffeur to stop. As Marchmont prepared to step out, his wife looked up with an inquiring scowl from an old number of a society paper which she had been fortunate enough to secure at the last hotel.

"Sarsaparilla or blood orange?" inquired Marchmont out of a full experience.

"You 'll spoil your digestion if you continue to drink that stuff," she replied with a shudder.

"It 's wet," he recommended.

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"I don't suppose you can get any decent candy?" she yawned.

"I 'll see."

As Marchmont drank his lukewarm blood orange out of a bottle, he studied the scarred and squashed remnants of twenty-cent chocolates in the fly-specked case. Apparently his choice was limited to these or gum-drops or checkerberry wafers.

In the meanwhile Whippen, after a keen inspection of his customer, which began with his spats and extended upward to the gay waistcoat and brilliant cravat, caught the look of *blasé* disgust which was slowly gathering strength on the smooth-shaven face just above the cravat. He reached behind the

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counter and brought out a box of Emily's home-made candies.

"Here 's something better," he said; "but I 'll have to charge you thirty cents for these."

Marchmont glanced at them.

"Anything for eighty cents?" he inquired casually. Now this figure almost took away Whippen's breath, but he gave no indication of the fact. Whippen was never swept off his guard. His keen blue eyes paused a moment at Marchmont's mouth to make sure this was no joke, the while he put two and two together. An open mind ready for new ideas — that was a characteristic of Whippen's. Readiness to act at once on any new idea

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— that was another characteristic. Whippen's aim was to satisfy his customers, not himself. He had never heard of eighty-cent candy, but he reached for the second box, which was almost identical with the first.

"Here 's some for eighty, but I don't believe it 's any better," answered Whippen.

Marchmont put the box in his pocket and tossed a bill upon the counter.

Now that was all there was to the incident. If you yourself can't see anything big or significant in it, then it proves one of two things — that Whippen was a fool and that you 're the genius, or that Whippen was a genius

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and you 're the fool, because Whippen firmly believed that he had discovered here a fundamental business truth. After Marchmont had gone, Whippen went about his work flushed and eager and thoughtful. He went home that night to his mouse of a wife still flushed and eager and thoughtful. He narrated the incident to her, but it only left her troubled.

"I don't know that it was quite honest, Tom," she said.

"I told him they were n't any better than the first box," he reminded her.

"But he did n't believe you."

"No, that 's the point; he would n't believe me."

"It 's very queer," she concluded.

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"I guess it 's human nature," said Whippen.

The next day Whippen made a little experiment. He wished to try out his theory further. He came down to the store early that morning and busied himself with the potatoes. They were selling at that time for a dollar a bushel. He took a basket and placed several clean sheets of wrapping paper in the bottom of it. Then he measured out a bushel of potatoes without selecting them and poured them in. He marked these one dollar and ten cents. Beside this basket he measured out another bushel of the same potatoes and marked them one dollar. With this trap set he waited.

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The first dozen people who came in were ordinary people and bought the dollar potatoes. He expected this. But toward the middle of the forenoon Mrs. Horatio Bennett came in. She was Judge Bennett's wife, and so, of course, was not an ordinary person. Her eyes were instantly riveted by the dollar-ten sign.

"I see you have at last some better potatoes," she said, studying them with the air of a judge.

"I don't know as they're any better," Whippen answered.

"I'll take a bushel," she replied.

"We're charging a little more for these, but the dollar ones are just as good," Whippen declared.

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"Do you think I have n't eyes in my head?" demanded Judge Bennett's wife.

"No, ma'am," Whippen hastened to assure her as he wrote down her order.

The proprietor had been looking on in amazement. As soon as the woman left he came over from his ledger and inspected the two baskets.

"Say, where did you get these fancy potatoes anyhow?" he inquired.

"They are n't fancy. They 're just the same as the others," answered Whippen.

"Then you 've got your nerve!"

"I told her," Whippen explained anxiously. "She would n't believe me."

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The next day he repeated the same experiment with his eggs. He had been getting twenty-four cents a dozen for them. They were all new-laid eggs brought in day by day by the farmers. No one in Centerville ever knew there was any other kind except when by accident a nest egg happened to be picked up. He divided the eggs into two lots, a big lot and a little lot. He didn't even pick out the large ones. He marked the big lot twenty-four cents with the brief descriptive label — "Eggs." The little lot he marked up to twenty-eight cents, and used some care in printing for these a neat label which bore the truthful announcement — "Strictly fresh eggs."

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Again he waited. This time it was the young doctor's wife who sprung the trap. There was some excuse for her, because having been married only six months she was still trying to live up to her husband's modern ideas. Fresh eggs was a hobby of his. She paused before the smaller basket.

"Are these strictly fresh?" she inquired, with the emphasis upon the "strictly."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Whippen.

"Then I'll have a half dozen of them," she decided.

"The others are fresh too," said Whippen, repeating his formula.

"These look the freshest," she declared, sticking to her point.

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"See here," exclaimed the proprietor after the doctor's wife had left. "What are you drivin' at anyhow? Are n't those eggs all the same?"

"Just the same," answered Whippen. "I told her so; but she would n't believe me."

The proprietor shook his head. For the life of him he could n't tell whether Whippen or the doctor's wife was the fool. But when his own wife sent down word for him to bring home some eggs that night he took the twenty-eight-cent eggs. Whippen found them gone when he came down the next morning and inquired into the matter.

"I took the first I laid my hands on," the proprietor explained sheepishly.

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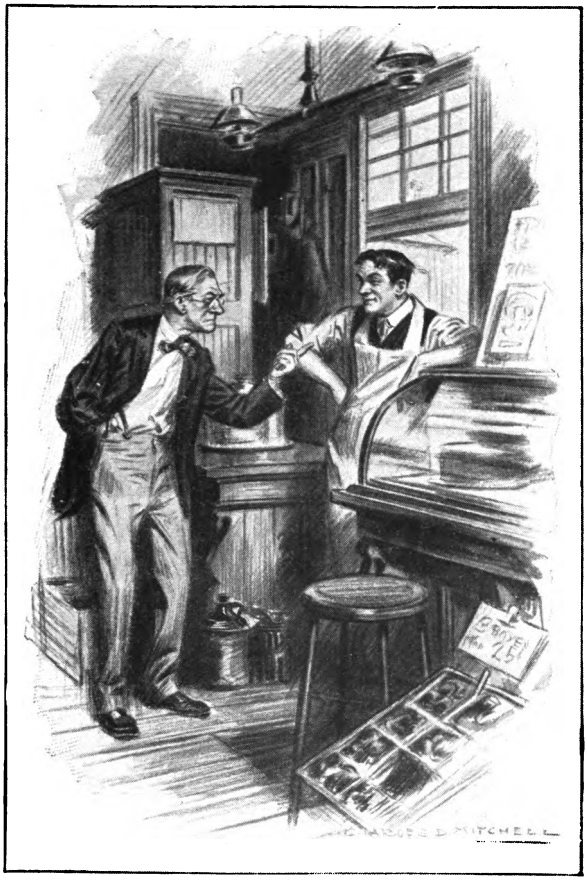

"What are you drivin' at anyhow? Are n't those eggs all the same?"

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"Maybe now they were the twenty-eight-cent eggs. But long 's there ain't no difference — "

"No difference at all," said Whippen.

Now Whippen took this new idea of his and lived with it for the next six months. He ate with it, worked with it, slept with it, and experimented with it still further. The better acquainted with it he became the more he liked it. It wore well. Also it grew until it had soon outgrown the possibilities of this village. It assumed proportions that turned his thoughts toward the great metropolis. He had spent a good deal of time lately studying the city newspapers, especially the advertise-

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ments. The latter fascinated him. They were like so many sirens calling him to come and join them with his new idea.

Then his eye chanced one day upon the following advertisement:

"Candy business for sale. Opportunity for a man with a small capital. Investigate."

The next morning Whippen boarded a train for the great metropolis. Like a hound on the trail he threaded for three hours a maze of streets that sang to him, that thrilled him with their bustle and noise like the music of a military band. So he came to the outskirts of the city, which looked as frayed and soiled as the hem of a

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woman's dress; so he came to a small three-story factory building. For a moment his spirits sank, for this was far from being the picture he had had in his mind. But what he saw at first was only the outside of the building; the heart of it was inside, behind an old battered desk. The heart of it was Pierre Lacoureur, as sadly battered in some ways as his desk, but with his tired gray eyes still reflecting a clean soul. He was a short, stocky man of sixty, with his hair sprinkled with white, like powdered sugar. He had had a hard time of it, had Pierre Lacoureur, because he knew much more about making candy than he did about selling it. He made very good

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candy. With him it was a fine art. But with debts piling up, things were in so bad a way that he was ready to quit.

Whippen introduced himself, and the two men took to each other at once. They talked over many things, and then Lacoureur guided Whippen about the factory and showed him the marvels of his art and what he could do if he had half a chance. Then the two men came back to the office, and Lacoureur endeavored to explain the business end of the enterprise, which he could n't do at all. But by diligent questioning Whippen probed matters to the bottom and in the end was not disheartened. Whippen went over the

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books and found that Lacoureur had bought the very best sugar and the very best chocolate and the very best of everything. He had put these together with consummate art, and the result was as good candy as it was possible for any human being to make. That was all Whippen wanted to know.

"The whole difficulty is that you have n't charged enough," announced Whippen.

"Not enough!" exclaimed Lacoureur. "I have tried to charge enough to make a decent profit, and I have n't been able to get that."

"Then you should have charged still more," Whippen declared. Lacoureur shrugged his shoulders.

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"It is one thing to charge and another to receive," he answered.

"It is the same thing if you go at it right," returned Whippen. "I 'm going to charge a dollar and a half a pound for your candy."

Lacoureur gave a sigh of disappointment. Up to this point his hopes had soared high. He had liked Whippen's honest and direct method of asking questions; he had liked his earnestness and his confidence. Now it seemed that he had been dealing with a madman.

"You have told me yourself that uptown they are charging eighty cents and a dollar for candy that is no better than yours. You have told me that no better candy than yours can be made."

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"And that is right," broke in Lacoureur with spirit.

"Then if we can't improve the candy, the thing to do is to improve the price," insisted Whippen. "Do you think people are going to believe that you have the best candy in the city if you 're selling it for sixty cents a pound with dollar goods on the market? Would you believe it yourself?"

Lacoureur thought a moment. He would n't expect to buy good Burgundy at the price of ordinary wine, that was sure. He would n't even bother to taste the cheap wine were it offered to him. He would n't even believe his tongue if a glass were forced upon him and he found it good.

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"Now that is very strange," murmured Lacoureur.

"How do you buy the best sugar and the best chocolate except by paying the best price?" demanded Whippen.

Lacoureur thought again. Between the very cheapest and the very best sugar of course there was a difference that a man could tell, but between the very best and the next best who could tell the difference? No one could tell except a chemist, and yet invariably he, Lacoureur, paid the highest price. And in so doing he received a certain satisfaction that was worth the difference.

"By Gar, perhaps you are right!" exclaimed Lacoureur. Whippen leaned forward.

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"You make the candy and I 'll sell it. Is that a bargain?"

Lacoureur nodded. So far as the spirit of the venture went, that much was decided on the spot. Nothing could have suited Lacoureur better. But there were many other details to be arranged, and Whippen proceeded to arrange them at once. It was done as between friends. Lacoureur opened all his books, and an estimate of the value of the plant was made, the amount of indebtedness figured out, the value of the stock in hand added in. Whippen decided that ten thousand dollars was the capital necessary to get things started and bound himself to this as his contribution. A law-

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yer was consulted and papers drawn up admitting the two men to equal partnership. This was done in less than two days, and then Whippen returned to Centerville to raise his money.

He did it — by the sheer power of conviction he did it. From the bank he secured a two-thousand-dollar loan on his father's place, and this with three thousand of his own savings made five. The other five he argued out of his late boss, who took his unsecured note.

"It 's that egg and potato business that makes me do it, even though I think you 're a blamed fool!" explained the storekeeper.

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Whippen sold all his household furnishings for three hundred dollars, and within a week was back again in the great metropolis with his frightened mouse of a wife beside him.

Now here is further proof that Whippen was either a fool or a genius — he was not afraid of the great metropolis. It did n't frighten him in the least; he viewed it merely as a big country village. For all he was concerned it might have been merely a greater Centerville. The only effect its bullying confusion had upon him was to excite him — to inflame his imagination further. As soon as he stepped off the train at the big station he felt at home.

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Lacoureur introduced Whippen to a modest boarding house, and there the latter left his disconsolate wife.

"You won't be here long; but if you get homesick you can go back to Centerville and wait there for me," said Whippen.

"I 'd rather wait here for you if I 'm homesick," she answered. Whippen kissed her good-by and started out to get acquainted. He did n't return until night. He kept this up day after day, starting at six in the morning and exploring until nightfall the labyrinth of streets. He wandered uptown and downtown. He went into the big stores and the little stores, with his eyes wide open and a question ever

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upon his lips. He noted the kind, the variety, and the method of packing all the candies that he saw. He priced them all, and always asked which was the best and why. Out of this confused mass of contradictory information he found five or six names looming larger and larger as standing for the best. Then he concentrated his efforts upon these, and in this way was slowly but surely drawn toward the stores located on the best street.

This best street was a wonderful street to Whippen. He liked the way they did business here. He liked the richness of the store furnishings; he liked the immaculate neatness and plate-glass; he liked the prices and

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the atmosphere of money round it all. He watched the wealthy people as they traveled up and down in their fine automobiles, with footmen holding tiger-skin robes over their arms waiting for them while they went into the best stores. He studied their faces and dress and saw in them only so many Marchmonts or Judge Bennett wives.

He brought his own wife up here one night to see it for herself, but she clung timidly to his long arm and scarcely dared lift her eyes. He led her in and out of these stores, but she felt like an intruder in them while he conducted himself like a proprietor. He embarrassed her with the number

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of questions he asked. She never spoke above a whisper.

Then one day he saw just what he had been looking for — a small store for rent right in the heart of this best street. It was exactly what he wanted, not too large and on the ground floor. He hurried at once to the real-estate agent. The latter named a figure that would have staggered any one but Whippen. He merely nodded and signed a lease for a year. When he came back and told Lacoureur, the latter trembled from head to foot.

"We are ruined!" he exclaimed.

"We are made!" answered Whippen coolly.

"But such rent!" cried Lacoureur.

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"You make the candy and I sell it," Whippen reminded him. "In all the stores I have visited I have n't seen any candy better than ours."

"*Sacré,* it could n't be better!" exploded Lacoureur. "We use the best materials, and that is an end of the matter."

"Exactly," agreed Whippen. "As for the making —"

"You sell the candy and I make it," Lacoureur reminded Whippen in his turn.

Whippen started out at once to buy the furnishings for his store. He took full advantage of what he had seen during the last week and bought the best. He stopped at nothing in the

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matter of expense. When he came to add up the total, here was another figure which would have stunned any other man. But Whippen gave the order with a coolness that went far toward securing for him the six months' credit he demanded.

The matter of a distinctive wrapping for his products had worried Whippen a good deal. So far as he could see there was little chance for improvement here over what was already used, and yet he must have an improvement. He went to the box manufacturers and looked over their best and shook his head. Their best was what was already in use. Boxes could n't be made any better than they

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had been made already. Thus the matter solved itself. The alternative was to simplify. He selected a plain white box of the best material but without frills or adornment of any kind. In order to carry out his idea still further and to afford a still greater contrast, Whippen selected, instead of the ordinary white wrapping paper, a slightly better grade of the tawny wrapping paper ordinarily used in meat shops. Here he unconsciously infringed upon an Arts and Crafts idea, but he did n't know it. The result was distinctive, but his final stroke betokened real genius. While experimenting with different devices for a trademark, he had scribbled his own name across the

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wrapper. He perceived that the written signature at once lent individuality to the package. The effect was much that of an artist's signature to his picture. It stood out like a voucher and betokened personal attention to each and every box. That was his cue — he would himself indorse every box sold by Whippen.

When he came back to Lacoureur with all these new ideas, the latter only shook his head and sought refuge behind the original agreement, "I will make the candy."

But way down deep in his heart Lacoureur was afraid. He was passing many a restless night.

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CHAPTER II

So far matters had run smoothly enough, but Whippen realized that as yet he had attended only to the superficial details. He had left to the last the larger problem — the problem of advertising, which was the heart of his whole undertaking. The store and its furnishings, the wrapper and box, even the candy itself were only contributory features. They simply constituted the trap. He had not yet supplied the bait.

Whippen did n't know there was a science of advertising. He did n't

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know there were advertising bureaus and men who had given their lives to the work. Even if he had it is doubtful if he would have used them, for it was his habit to do things in his own way. So he bent his energies to this new task.

Whippen had a knack of simplifying problems. He asked himself what he wished to accomplish and then made for that goal in a straight line. In this case he knew that, first of all, he wished to reach the best people. He wished to reach the Marchmonts and Judge Bennett wives. It was clear, then, that he must make use of the mediums read by them. To make this selection was, after all, only a matter

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of commonsense. It was as easy to recognize the best papers as it was the best people. They dressed more expensively than the other papers and cost more. They advertised a more costly line of goods and charged more for their advertisements. He selected on this basis three dailies and two weeklies and sought their advertising managers. Without bravado he talked big. He wanted plenty of space and was willing, if they could grant him suitable terms, to sign a three-months contract. He told them that he was about to place upon the market the highest-priced candy ever sold and wanted to make that point clear to the best people.

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"How much are you selling it for?" inquired Carson, the first man to whom he talked. He was interested at once in the statement.

"A dollar and a half a pound," Whippen answered without embarrassment.

"Say, that's going some," exclaimed Carson. "It must be good stuff."

"The best that can be made," answered Whippen.

If at first the manager was inclined to be suspicious of the project, he settled down to business before Whippen had talked five minutes with him. The latter showed him his lease of the finest store on the best street as evi-

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dence of good faith. Within an hour the rates had been satisfactorily arranged and the contract signed. Then Carson, out of a full experience and with a feeling of sympathy for the enthusiastic young man, volunteered some advice. Leaning forward, he tapped Whippen significantly upon the arm.

"If I were you, I'd lie low about the price. Play up strong the fact that you've got something new in the candy line."

"But I have n't," Whippen interrupted.

"Huh? Did n't you say it was the best ever?"

"I said it was the best that can be made."

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"Then whoop 'er up on that point. What you going to call it?"

"Whippen's."

"That's all right," the manager nodded thoughtfully. "Though it is n't so fancy as I like. If you had something now like the "Elite" or "Best Ever" or "Monogram" — something elegant and distinctive, understand."

"I've never heard of any candy called Whippen's," returned Whippen.

"No," Carson admitted. "That's distinctive enough. But — well, of course, I don't want to butt in. I'm merely making suggestions. If you've decided on Whippen's, enough said. Only in the advertising dope I'd place

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the emphasis on the trade name rather than the price. Drive home the fact that Whippen's is the best candy and that the best candy is Whippen's."

"That's just what I want to do," agreed Whippen.

"Then, when you have them all excited and eager, you can spring the price on 'em. See? Don't want to butt in, but I thought you were new to the game."

Whippen didn't have any objection to making that confession.

"I am," he admitted.

"Then just think over what I've said before you send in your copy."

"All right. But you'll set up the copy just as I send it in?"

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"Sure. Sure."

"Then I 'll have it ready to print Sunday. Good day."

"Good day. And, by the way, let me know when you open up. My wife is a crank about candy. How much did you say you 're charging?"

"A dollar and a half a pound," answered Whippen.

"Well, it *ought* to be good for that."

He had no more difficulty with the other advertising managers than he had with Carson, but he received plenty more salutary advice. However, this did n't disturb him any, and he went home to write his advertisements.

Seated before a rickety table in his

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barren room, with his wife beside him knitting a pair of bath slippers, Whippen concentrated his thoughts upon this vital problem. He knew that his enterprise would succeed or fail solely upon the way in which he first presented his claim to attention. Yet he never doubted, never hesitated. There was never any question in his mind as to what the pith of the advertisement should be. It was only a matter of deciding upon the best form. He wrote and rewrote, stopping every now and then to read the result to his wife. She always listened intently and then nodded approvingly.

"I think that 's very good, Tom," was her invariable reply.

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Whereupon he invariably tore the sheet off the pad, crumpled it up, and threw it on the floor. Every now and then she went around and picked up these failures and placed them in the wastebasket. She was a neat woman.

In the end, however, his genius for simplifying again served him well. On the second day he drew himself up with a jerk. He asked himself what, after all, was the very heart of what he wished to impress upon the best people. Manifestly it was first, as Carson had suggested, that Whippen's had appeared; second, despite what Carson had suggested, that Whippen's was the highest-priced candy in the

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world. Then, why not say as much in so many words and be done with it?

He proceeded to do so at once. This was the result:

WHIPPEN'S

The highest-priced candy in the world. One dollar and a half the pound. Never cheaper.

543 —— Street

He liked this. He read it to his wife. She listened intently and then said rather wistfully:

"Do you know, Tom, you 've never brought me home even a bite of your candy?"

"So?" he replied quickly. "I 'll bring home a box to-night."

He had written this in the middle of his pad, and he liked the way it stuck out of the white space surround-

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ing it. So he arranged to have it appear that way in the paper, though it left blank much precious room which was costing him a great deal of money. He resolved to have this run in the dailies both morning and evening for the first week, beginning Sunday. He wanted to make sure that not a single reader of the best papers missed it.

For the weeklies he simplified his announcement even further. Figuring that here he had only one opportunity to arrest attention, he cut out every possible word and increased the size of his type. The result was this:

WHIPPEN'S
THE CANDY THAT SELLS FOR ONE DOLLAR AND A HALF THE POUND
543 —— STREET

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Nothing could be simpler, nothing more direct, nothing clearer. He submitted his copy to Lacoureur. The latter read it and passed his hand over his forehead.

"Eh, bien, you are honest," he admitted nervously.

"And so is your candy, is n't it?" demanded Whippen.

Lacoureur could always be aroused by even the most remote insinuation against his candy.

"I 'll give a thousand francs to any one who can prove it is n't," he blustered.

"Exactly," nodded Whippen. "And we 're going to be just as square and aboveboard in our advertising as we

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are in our goods. We make no claim except that they are the best, and that they always will be. But I haven't claimed even that much yet."

"Eh?" questioned Lacoureur.

"Not a word of it."

"Let me read those again."

Lacoureur went over the copy syllable by syllable.

"That's right," he said, as though bewildered. "Now I thought you said something more. *Sacré,* these things are too much for my poor head. I must get back to the shop."

In the meanwhile work upon the store itself was almost completed. Whippen determined to open on Monday, October fourth, and the first of

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October found everything done except a few finishing touches. He was immensely pleased with the result. The place looked very attractive, and furnished a worthy setting for the most expensive candies in the world. Without being in the least garish there was n't a detail that did n't show upon the face of it that it was as good as money could buy. The floor was of mosaic, all the woodwork of genuine mahogany, the walls done in the choicest enamel finish, all the plate-glass the clearest and most expensive. The few metal trimmings were of silver. His order had been the highest-priced in everything and the highest-priced he had been given. It was im-

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possible for any one to enter that store and not know at a glance that here the best and only the best was sold. It was manifest that only the best *could* be sold here. A man does n't put a gold case upon a dollar watch; he does n't use a valuable frame for a lithograph.

Whippen had of course obtained many of these ideas from the stores already established. He took advantage of the experience of others, only he always carried the good points one step further. He had noticed that the young ladies who served the candies in the best stores were invariably attractive. It was only common sense that the clerks should harmonize, as

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far as possible, with their surroundings. Not only this, but he realized that they might be an attraction in themselves. He had observed that, on the average, seventy-five per cent of the actual purchasers of candy, whatever its ultimate goal, were men. A pretty girl is always a pretty girl and a man always a man, particularly among the best people who have an eye for such things. Bearing also on this subject is the fact that no man of spirit — and every man who purchases candy is a man of some spirit — cares to haggle over the price with a pretty girl. He can't possibly do it and retain a good opinion of himself. He exposes himself immediately to the

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suspicion that he is not of the best people and should be recommended elsewhere.

In going over the factory Whippen had noticed the three pretty nieces of Lacoureur. They were dainty, gently bred girls who through a turn in the family fortunes had been obliged to give up their education in Paris and had sought shelter under the generous wing of their uncle. This factory had come to be an asylum for all the needy relatives, but in many ways this had worked to the advantage of Lacoureur. If it burdened him with family troubles, it saved him from the graver labor troubles which so harried his competitors.

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Whippen borrowed these three sisters for his store. He took them to a dressmaker, whom they recommended, and showed her a picture on a tin box.

"That 's what I want," he ordered.

The picture was that of a white-capped lass in a charmingly quaint costume of a past period.

"Make it a little different if you can, long 's you keep it just as pretty," he said. "But use the best stuff you can buy. Never mind the expense."

What with the suggestions from the three pretty nieces themselves, the little dressmaker had no difficulty whatever in filling the order. The result was three rustling silk gowns that without the trim aprons worn over

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them would have adorned any beauty in the city. With the three pretty nieces inside of them the effect was deserving of an artist.

The gowns were finished on October second, and all the next day the three nieces were in a great flutter of excitement. On Sunday too Whippen for the first time in his life saw his name in print. He rose at dawn, obtained the earliest papers on the street, and spread them out on the table before his wife.

"Oh, Tom!" she exclaimed, as she read the advertisement.

"I guess people will see it all right," he said.

She glanced around timidly.

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"I feel as though the whole city were peeking in the windows," she answered.

"I hope they won't stop at the name. It 's the dollar and a half the pound I want them to see," he said.

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CHAPTER III

On October fourth the store was stocked with Lacoureur's finest creations; on October fourth several thousand people who had glanced indifferently at Whippen's blunt announcement in the Sunday papers found it confronting them again as they drank their coffee; on October fourth at eight o'clock Whippen himself threw open the doors of the new establishment; on October fourth the three pretty nieces stood behind the mahogany counters, somewhat confused

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but eager to serve all who might enter. As for Whippen, after making sure that everything was ship-shape, he paced up and down on the other side of the street and continued his study of the best people as they passed his door. Few of them went by without a glance at the windows, and several young men on their way to business even paused long enough to take a second look at the three pretty nieces within. But no one entered. Whippen waited patiently as any fisherman sitting on a log, but from time to time he studied his watch. It was at exactly eleven fifteen that he saw the first customer actually enter. Crossing the street, he followed in order to ob-

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serve. The man looked over the candy approvingly, selected five pounds, and leaning jauntily on his stick ogled one of the pretty nieces while she did up the package in the brown wrapping paper bearing Whippen's signature. Then he tossed a ten-dollar bill upon the counter, and Marie, making change, handed him back what was left. The man stared a second at the two dollars and a half. Evidently he had not read the advertisement but had been attracted by the store window.

"I say, little girl, these must be good," he exclaimed.

"Oui, monsieur," answered Marie, with a smile.

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Whereupon the man hastily thrust the change into his pocket and reluctantly departed.

Whippen was satisfied. His customer had paid the dollar and a half without protest because he received the assurance that he was getting the very best candy — even discounting at its full value Marie's smile and silk dress. And Whippen knew that when the candy reached its destination it would make good. Whoever tasted it would receive the full satisfaction that comes only of the best materials plus the deeper satisfaction that comes only of the highest price. The sugar and chocolate and nuts would satisfy the palate; the price would satisfy the

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"I say, these must be good!" he exclaimed

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more delicate sensibilities. It would be difficult for them to say from which they derived the keener pleasure — or which was the more legitimate.

Several other people purchased Whippen's during the next few hours, and late in the afternoon there was quite a group in the store. Whippen without intruding kept his ears wide open and probably was more pleased by a conversation he overheard on the sidewalk in the late afternoon than with anything which happened that first day.

"I want to step in here a moment," said the first gallant. "The girl wanted me to bring her home some of this new candy."

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"What is it?" inquired the second gallant.

"I don't know. Something new. She read the advertisement in the paper this morning. Dollar and a half the pound."

"Thought you always bought her Blank's?"

"Always have, but she won't have anything but the best."

That bit of talk ran through Whippen's head all the rest of the week. It contained a haunting suggestion which he could n't quite grasp. Even in the excitement of watching the sales increase steadily day by day, culminating on Saturday with scarcely any of his modest stock left over, he found

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himself constantly referring to that fragment of dialogue. Then, after awakening Sunday morning refreshed by his well-earned sleep, the idea came to him full born.

"She won't have anything but the best," the man had said. That was the nub of the situation. She would n't have anything but the best, and under those circumstances he did n't dare to buy her anything but the best. It was She he must work upon. He must crystallize that idea for her. Back of the seventy-five per cent of men who purchased candy there was in a great majority of cases presumably a "She," and She wanted the best. If now he could make it clear to these thousands

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of women that Whippen's cost a half dollar more than the best; if he could establish this as an indisputable and well-known fact; if he could so advertise it that first She knew and then that He knew and then that She knew He knew, and finally that He knew She knew He knew — why, it would be a brave man indeed who dared buy anything else but Whippen's. The advertisement sprang to his lips ready made for him. It was this:

IF HE DOES N'T BUY YOU WHIPPEN'S, HE
DOES N'T BUY THE BEST
ONE DOLLAR AND A HALF THE POUND
543 —— STREET

There you are! Once this fact was spread abroad, no swain could claim to

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be gallant to his utmost unless he bought Her Whippen's. It was a dollar and a half the pound, and any one who bought only dollar candy must do so at his peril. Admitting even that a man could n't afford it, then all the more credit to him for his extravagance. Is it not by extravagant methods of all kinds that a man expresses his regard? Extravagant speech, extravagant flowers, extravagant seats at the theater, extravagant dinners, extravagant candies — they are all expressive evidence of an extravagant esteem. If she did n't get Whippen's, she did n't get the best. That was an end of the matter. Whippen was determined that every woman

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in the great metropolis should know this.

Whippen opened his campaign in every woman's journal that had a reader in the great metropolis, using just this:

IF HE DOES N'T BUY YOU WHIPPEN'S, HE
DOES N'T BUY THE BEST
ONE DOLLAR AND A HALF THE POUND
543 —— STREET

This was expensive business, and took not only shrewd talk on his part to secure the fullest possible credit for this extra advertising expenditure, but also took every cent of cash resulting from each week's sales. But he did n't hesitate. He knew that his advertising would count more at the beginning

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than at the end. It was at the start that he must indelibly fix his fact in the minds of his customers — at the start, when their minds were fresh and receptive and his idea was new. After this every passing day would of itself strengthen it, until finally it became tradition; until finally "Whippen's" and "the best" and "candy" should be synonymous. Then he could trust the women themselves to keep the truth alive and hand it down to their daughters as part of their education in the best.

Everywhere that women went, Whippen managed to confront them with his self-evident statement. He used the theater programmes, doubling

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his space at the matinées. He made special terms with the best hotels to have nothing but Whippen's served at tea, giving them the candy out of hand where this was necessary. He kept this up for two months and his sales increased by leaps and bounds. At the end of this period it is doubtful if there was a lovesick youth in the city with the energy to lay aside a dollar and a half who had n't bought at least a pound of Whippen's. And having bought one pound, who of them would have the courage to revert to anything cheaper unless, indeed, they had in the meanwhile won their suit and lived their honeymoon? His store on Saturday was a study in the gentle

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passion. Young men and old jostled one another in their endeavor to make sure of their gift before the stock was exhausted. A list of their names would have made almost a complete social register. Not only that, but it would have included a large number of those who some day hoped to become a part of the same register. It would have included still others who even without that hope wished to live as near that standard as possible. There were still others.

Whippen continued his habit of haunting his store both inside and out, especially on Saturdays. He learned something there every week. His attention had been called particularly to

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a young man who had been coming regularly ever since the store opened. He had been interested at once because the lad had a strikingly earnest face and because he by no means appeared to be one of the best people as far as clothes went. Even when the day was bitter cold he never wore an overcoat, though his suit was thin and threadbare. Half the time he did n't look as though he had enough to eat. Yet never a Saturday passed but what he bought his pound of Whippen's.

Whippen had a big heart, and it warmed towards this young man. He began to look forward every week to seeing him as though he were a friend. He liked the lad's spirit, for surely it

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showed spirit to make this weekly gift. Evidently it was at some cost. One day he had proof of this.

The lad approached the store, but instead of entering passed on reluctantly. At the corner he paused, and returning again seemed about to enter only to change his mind and continue down the street. He had not gone more than a block before he again came back, and this time stood on the curbing and surreptitiously counted his money.

It was clear enough that it was a question with him whether this week he could afford the luxury. As Whippen watched the pantomime, he felt conscience-stricken. He felt person-

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ally responsible for the lad's quandary and about as mean as though he were the tender-hearted proprietor of a grog shop instead of a candy store. Acting upon the impulse of the moment, he crossed to the lad's side and spoke to him.

"Beg pardon," he began abruptly, "but — did you want some candy?"

The young man turned upon him fiercely.

"Who the devil are you?" he demanded.

"I 'm Whippen."

The lad looked Whippen over from head to foot and then answered:

"If I thought you were I 'd take a chance on punching your face."

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"Why?" inquired Whippen.

"Why? Because I've been kept stony-broke for two months on account of Whippen. Because Whippen is a confounded robber. If you're Whippen, put that in your pipe and smoke it."

The lad turned away and started off.

"Wait a minute," pleaded Whippen. "I'm Whippen all right, but I don't want any one to think I'm a robber."

"Then what the deuce do you mean by charging a dollar and a half a pound for that stuff and advertising it?"

"Because the candy is worth that price," answered Whippen.

"It isn't, and if you're Whippen you know it."

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"If it is n't, what are you buying it for?" demanded Whippen.

"Because — because the girl I 'm buying it for thinks it is. This is none of your business, but if you want the reason, that 's it."

"She ought to know. She eats it."

"She eats it all right. Won't have anything else. So when you have n't the price, you lose, that 's all."

Whippen was both immensely satisfied and very uncomfortable. The boy had no business of course to spend his money for expensive candy if he could n't afford to do so, and yet he, Whippen, had made it practically impossible for him to do anything else. He had reached Her. He had con-

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vinced Her that Whippen's was the best. It left the boy no chance to argue, even had he been inclined to argue.

"Look here," exclaimed Whippen, "I don't want to get any one into trouble. I — Wait outside here a minute, will you?"

Whippen hurried into the store, and a moment later came out with a five-pound box of candy. He thrust this into the hands of the young man while the latter stared in amazement.

"Here, take this home to her with my compliments."

The young man tried to refuse the gift.

"I 'm no beggar," he stammered.

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"And I'm no robber," retorted Whippen.

He hurried away and out of sight before the young man could say anything more.

Now a point which must not be forgotten is that Whippen's candies in and of themselves made good so far as it is possible for confections in and of themselves to make good. Lacoureur stinted himself neither in painstaking care nor materials. He spared no effort to make them just as good as he knew how and never fell below this standard. He continued to buy the highest-priced sugar and the highest-priced chocolate that was in the market. If by this course he was n't able

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to make any better candy than the best, he made it just as good as the best. So far as the nature of his product went there was a natural and inevitable limit. But in the matter of the prestige which Whippen was establishing for this product there was no limit.

This prestige in its way was just as fair and legitimate a commodity as the candies. The best people were not only willing but glad to pay for it. In supplying them with one more opportunity to display the fact that they bought only the best of everything, just as he supplied every swain with one more opportunity of testifying to his regard, he was giving them an honest return for their money. In all but the ex-

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ceptional case Whippen really deserved the gratitude of every one. He was doing his little best to rescue a dull world from mediocrity. He raised the standard of a luxury to a point where it stood for something. Whippen's served at tea or at dinner was mute testimony to the good taste of the hostess, just as rare wines and choice tobaccos of well-known brands testified to the discrimination of the host. Every one now knew the cost of Whippen's and that willingness to pay this price was evidence of a critical palate. Not a few spoke of the superior flavor of Whippen's and munched the tidbits with the air of connoisseurs.

At the end of the first six months

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Whippen decreased his advertising simply because he had by then as much business as he could manage. Lacoureur was working all the day and half the night trying to keep pace with his partner. It was impossible, and he said as much to Whippen one day.

"We must enlarge our plant," he insisted.

Right here is where Whippen again displayed his genius.

"No," he replied unhesitatingly. "We 'd better leave well enough alone."

"But we could sell twice as much as I can now make."

"Easy as rolling off a log. But we don't want to. We 're making money

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enough for us both and — we must n't cheapen our product. It 's a whole lot better for us to make them hustle to buy our goods than it is to make ourselves hustle in order to sell them."

Whippen has held steadfastly to that rule. That 's why you can't order Whippen's by mail; that 's why you can't buy it outside the great metropolis; that 's why every visitor to the great metropolis makes it a point to take home a box of Whippen's. That in turn is one reason why Whippen's business is permanent.

Whippen made only one innovation. At the end of the first year he established a soda fountain. He charges twenty-five cents a glass for mixtures

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that cost him less than five. He receives this price because it is served at Whippen's. This has become a most lucrative feature of his business.

Whippen rides back and forth to his fine estate in Centerville in a limousine now — a limousine of the finest French make. He knows it is the finest because it is the most expensive car on the market. His wife has developed rapidly, and now associates with the best people in Centerville — with Judge Bennett's wife, who is said to have a hundred thousand dollars in her own name, and with Mrs. Morehouse, who is the wife of President Morehouse of the Centerville National Bank. Mrs. Whippen is said to be the best-

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dressed woman in the town, for every one knows that all her costumes are bought on the best street of the great metropolis, where one has only to inquire the prices to form one's opinion. Whippen insists that she shall have only the very best of everything.

Lacoureur spends at least three months out of every year in Paris. It was after returning from his first trip that he was all for establishing stores there and in London. Whippen allowed his partner to unburden himself of his enthusiastic arguments for the project and then shook his head.

"We could n't do this anywhere else on earth," he declared. "If people want Whippen's, they 'll have to come

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to Whippen's — even if they have to cross the ocean."

So there the matter rests. It's rather hard on those who live outside the great metropolis, because, as every one knows, "If he does n't buy her Whippen's, he does n't buy the best."

And there is at least one crisis in every man's life when he does n't like to be thought mean.

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